

Assembly Bill No. 840

CHAPTER 74

An act to amend Section 17021.6 of the Health and Safety Code, relating to employee housing.

[Approved by Governor July 7, 2011. Filed with Secretary
of State July 8, 2011.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 840, Torres. Employee Housing Act: agricultural land use.

The Employee Housing Act requires a person operating employee housing to obtain a permit to operate that housing from the agency that enforces the act, which can either be the Department of Housing and Community Development or a city, county, or city and county that assumes responsibility for enforcing the act. The act designates any employee housing consisting of no more than 36 beds in a group quarters or 12 units or spaces designed for use by a single family or household as an agricultural land use.

This bill would make technical, nonsubstantive changes to these provisions of law.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 17021.6 of the Health and Safety Code is amended to read:

17021.6. (a) The owner of any employee housing who has qualified or intends to qualify for a permit to operate pursuant to this part may invoke this section.

(b) Any employee housing consisting of no more than 36 beds in a group quarters or 12 units or spaces designed for use by a single family or household shall be deemed an agricultural land use for the purposes of this section. For the purpose of all local ordinances, employee housing shall not be deemed a use that implies that the employee housing is an activity that differs in any other way from an agricultural use. No conditional use permit, zoning variance, or other zoning clearance shall be required of this employee housing that is not required of any other agricultural activity in the same zone. The permitted occupancy in employee housing in a zone allowing agricultural uses shall include agricultural employees who do not work on the property where the employee housing is located.

(c) Except as otherwise provided in this part, employee housing consisting of no more than 36 beds in a group quarters or 12 units or spaces designed for use by a single family or household shall not be subject to any business taxes, local registration fees, use permit fees, or other fees to which other

agricultural activities in the same zone are not likewise subject. This subdivision does not forbid the imposition of local property taxes, fees for water services and garbage collection, fees for normal inspections, local bond assessments, and other fees, charges, and assessments to which other agricultural activities in the same zone are likewise subject. Neither the State Fire Marshal nor any local public entity shall charge any fee to the owner, operator, or any resident for enforcing fire inspection regulation pursuant to state law or regulations or local ordinance, with respect to employee housing consisting of no more than 36 beds in a group quarters or 12 units or spaces designed for use by a single family or household.

(d) For the purposes of any contract, deed, or covenant for the transfer of real property, employee housing consisting of no more than 36 beds in a group quarters or 12 units or spaces designed for use by a single family or household shall be considered an agricultural use of property, notwithstanding any disclaimers to the contrary. For purposes of this section, “employee housing” includes employee housing defined in subdivision (b) of Section 17008, even if the housing accommodations or property are not located in a rural area, as defined by Section 50101.

(e) The Legislature hereby declares that it is the policy of this state that each county and city shall permit and encourage the development and use of sufficient numbers and types of employee housing facilities as are commensurate with local need. This section shall apply equally to any charter city, general law city, county, city and county, district, and any other local public entity.

(f) If any owner who invokes the provisions of this section fails to maintain a permit to operate pursuant to this part throughout the first 10 consecutive years following the issuance of the original certificate of occupancy, both of the following shall occur:

(1) The enforcement agency shall notify the appropriate local government entity.

(2) The public agency that has waived any taxes, fees, assessments, or charges for employee housing pursuant to this section may recover the amount of those taxes, fees, assessments, or charges from the landowner, less 10 percent of that amount for each year that a valid permit has been maintained.

(g) Subdivision (f) shall not apply to an owner of any prospective, planned, or unfinished employee housing facility who has applied to the appropriate state and local public entities for a permit to construct or operate pursuant to this part prior to January 1, 1996.